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ABSTRACT

This program introduces undergraduate and graduate university students to the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) system. The document includes an outline of objectives, a list of materials, description of procedures, the script for the taped program, and an evaluation form. This program was developed as a point-of-use library instruction aid. (Author)

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AN INTRODUCTION TO ERIC:

SCRIPT FOR A TAPED POINT-OF-USE PROGRAM

1977

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

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IR008111

OBJECTIVES

The user should understand:

1. What types of information ERIC includes.
 - a. Subjects: education, urban studies, minorities, social problems.
 - b. Formats: conference reports, curriculum guides, newsletters, pamphlets, usually not periodical articles.
2. How to find information in ERIC by subject, author, and institution.
 - a. Resources in Education
 - 1) Indexes
 - 2) Document resumes
 - b. Thesaurus - selecting appropriate search terms.
 - c. Locating microfiche or items not available from EDRS.

MATERIALS

Portable cassette player with headphones

Cassette tape

Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors

Resources in Education (September, 1976)

PROCEDURE

The user signs out the program at the Reference Desk and listens to it in a carrel right next to the ERIC materials. Printed guides are also available in the carrel. In the future, we hope to have a cassette player permanently mounted in the carrel so that the user has immediate access to the program.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ERIC

Do you need to find information on school integration, handicapped children, bilingual education, child development, American Indians? Then you should become familiar with ERIC - The Educational Resources Information Center publications.

ERIC is a collection of documents on microfiche, a sheet of microfilm the size of a file card. National ERIC clearinghouses collect publications and distribute them on microfiche to individuals, libraries and institutions. The main focus of ERIC is on publications dealing with education, but there is also excellent representation from the social science fields, especially topics of current concern like minorities, urban studies, drugs, etc.

Types of materials in ERIC include conference papers, newsletters, bibliographies, curriculum guides, pamphlets and research papers. These are generated by government agencies, researchers, organizations, schools, and individual teachers. Generally ERIC does not include periodical articles. What makes the ERIC collection so significant is that it includes up-to-date unpublished and locally produced materials that would be very difficult to obtain otherwise.

In order to find information on your topic, you will need to become familiar with the components of the ERIC system. Two of them are on this table - Resources in Education, the yellow and white book - and the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, the red and blue book. Resources in Education summarizes and indexes all of the documents in the ERIC system. Open the September, 1976, issue on this table. Notice that the first part consists of document resumes; the second part consists of three indexes: subject, author, and institution. In order to find information on a given topic, you will need to check appropriate terms in the subject index of Resources in Education - but first there is one consideration. In ERIC, terminology is important - when searching the subject index you must use words listed in the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, the red and blue book. The Thesaurus contains

all terms you can use when searching the subject index of Resources in Education. Let's take a sample subject and go through the steps you would use to search the ERIC system. Let's suppose that as a student teacher, you need to find information on developing a curriculum for environmental education.

As the first step, check to see if "Environmental Education" is a term used in the Thesaurus. Please open the issue. Do you see it on page 80? Environmental Education is in bold print, indicating that it is an appropriate term to check in the subject index of Resources in Education. The terms listed under it are suggestions for other applicable subject terms: A narrower term designated by (NT) "Conservation Education" is listed, a broader term (BT) "Education" is listed. Note that "Education" would be too broad for our purposes. Many related terms (RT), some of which may be helpful, are also listed. When doing a thorough search, it is usually advisable to check the subject index under several different terms to insure that you have covered all the possibilities. You need to exercise judgment in selecting the best terms for your topic. If you don't find the term you wish to use listed in the Thesaurus, try to think of alternate or broader words.

Now that you know that Environmental Education is an acceptable term, let's look it up in the subject index of your issue of Resources in Education. There are quite a few items listed. Let's examine the titles. The first one, An Assessment of Value Preferences of College Students..., seems too specialized for our needs. The fourth title, Environmental Education: A Source Book for Educators, is perhaps more what we're looking for. You can find a summary of this document by copying down or remembering the ED number (ED 123 095) and turning to the front of this issue - the document resume section. Notice that the documents are arranged in numerical order. Look for the summary of ED 123 095... Have you found it? It's on page 165 - ED 123 095. Let's look at the information that is given under the ED number. First, the author, Alice Linder, is listed. Next, the title, then the

organization where the document originated, the publication date, and the number of pages. The price for microfiche and paper copies is listed; it is possible to purchase copies; however, we have all available microfiche on file in the library.

The descriptors are the subject terms that apply to this document - the starred descriptors are those terms that are used for this document in the subject index. If you had looked in the subject index under "Curriculum Guides," for example, you would have found this title listed.

The identifier - "South Carolina" - is an index term that is a proper noun, or name.

In the next column, you will note that there is a substantial summary of the document. Take a minute to read it over.

Now, if you wanted to read the full document, you would copy down the ED number and locate the microfiche by number in the black cabinets behind you. Microfiche viewers are available at the rear of this floor. Operating instructions are on each machine. When you are finished, return the microfiche to the box on top of the black cabinets. You can have enlarged, paper copies of microfiche made for \$.06 per page on the card - just take the microfiche downstairs to the copy center. You can also borrow a portable microfiche viewing machine and ERIC documents free of charge for a two-week period. Sign out the viewer and the fiche at the Reserve Desk on this floor.

Let's look back in the subject index again for some more information on environmental education - turn to page 232 of Resources in Education. The title following the one we just looked up is "The Environment: Some Viewpoints." The ED number for this document is followed by two slashes which mean that this publication is not available on microfiche. However, that does not necessarily mean that it is not available in the library. Turn to the document resume for ED 123 038...

that's ED 123 038. Above the line which states "Document not available from EDRS" you will note that this publication is available from a commercial publisher. You could check the card catalog to see if we have this title in book form. ERIC includes summaries of publications not available on microfiche as a current awareness service.

When you are looking for information on your topic, you should determine how much information you need. If you want a model lesson plan, you might only need to look at one appropriate document. However, if you are doing a research paper, you will have to search the indexes extensively. Remember that we have been using only one month's issue of Resources in Education. For a thorough search, you should use all current issues and at least five years of the prior annual indexes. Using the annual index saves the time of looking through 12 separate issues of Resources in Education. Annual indexes do not contain document resumes. If you wish to read the document resume you will need to go back to the monthly issues of Resources in Education and locate the resume by ED number. (Please note that earlier issues of Resources in Education are called Research in Education.)

While most searches are made by using the subject index, remember that you can also search by author or by institution - for example the International Reading Association or the State University of New York College at Brockport.

Now, let's review.

- First - Have a topic in mind. ERIC will probably contain information on any education related subject or topic of current interest - American Indians, day care, women, etc.
- Second - Select appropriate search terms, using the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors as an aid. For a thorough search, select several terms.
- Third - Look up appropriate terms in the subject index of Resources in Education.
- Fourth - Examine the titles and jot down the ED numbers of those you wish to look up.

Fifth - Turn to the document resumes and evaluate the usefulness of the material.

Sixth - Using the ED number locate the microfiche you wish to read.

Seventh - Search other current issues and annual indexes if more information is needed.

Now you should be ready to start searching ERIC for materials on your topic. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please ask the reference librarian.

ERIC EVALUATION

1. Was the presentation
☐ Too long
☐ Too short
☐ About right
2. Was the presentation
☐ Clear, easy to follow
☐ Unclear, difficult to follow
☐ Clear in some parts, difficult in others (can you specify _____)
3. Did the presentation go into
☐ Too much detail
☐ Not enough detail
☐ About the right amount of detail
4. How helpful was the aid?
☐ Very helpful
☐ Moderately helpful
☐ Slightly or not helpful
5. Do you feel you can now use the ERIC system for your own research?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Only with further instruction
6. Do you prefer some other means for learning how to use reference tools?
☐ Yes
☐ No
7. If yes, please check which you prefer
☐ Individual assistance
☐ Classroom instruction
☐ Printed guide
☐ Other _____
8. Do you have any suggestion for improving this program?

A SHORT, TAPED INTRODUCTION TO ERIC IS NOW AVAILABLE: ASK AT THE REFERENCE DESK

DRAKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY
STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT, N.Y.

ERIC: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER - MICROFICHE COLLECTION

What it is: A collection of materials on microfiche. (microfilm in a 4" x 6" card format)

What subjects are covered: All aspects of education as well as subjects of current social concern (urban studies, minorities, etc.)

What types of materials are included: Documents, research reports, curriculum guides, bibliographies, evaluative studies, conference papers, pamphlets, etc. Generally periodical articles are not included (use Education Index or Current Index to Journals in Education instead)

HOW TO USE ERIC

- Step 1. Choose an appropriate topic. ERIC will probably contain information on any education related subject or topic of current interest - American Indians, day care, women, etc.
- Step 2. Select appropriate search terms, using the THESAURUS as an aid. For a thorough search, select several terms. Specific names (Piaget, Thailand, etc.) do not need to be checked in the THESAURUS.
- Step 3. Start with the most recent issue of RESOURCES IN EDUCATION. Look up your subject in the SUBJECT INDEX at the back of the issue. (Or if you are looking for publications by a particular author, use the AUTHOR INDEX). If publications of a particular institution - N.Y. State Education Dept., National Education Assoc., - interest you, check the INSTITUTION INDEX).
- Step 4. Examine the titles listed in the index under your subject. Write down or remember the ED number (ex: ED 080 455) of titles that interest you.
- Step 5. Turn to the document resume section in the front of the issue of RESOURCES IN EDUCATION and locate the ED number for your title. There you will find a summary of that particular document.
- Step 6. Locate the ERIC microfiche (by ED number) in the black cabinets. Look at them on microfiche readers in the library or check out the microfiche and a portable reader (free of charge) at the RESERVE DESK. You can copy pages of the document for 6¢ per page in the COPY CENTER (ground floor).
- Step 7. If more information is needed, repeat steps 4 & 5 for all issues of RESOURCES IN EDUCATION of the current year. Search back several years using the semi-annual and annual subject indexes.

For further information, check the sample entry in the front of each issue of Resources in Education or ask a reference librarian for assistance.